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Message Text

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47
ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 COME-00 EB-11 MMS-03 PER-05 RSC-01

DRC-01 /036 W
---------- 100633
R 271115Z DEC 73
FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9307

UNCLAS BANGKOK 19955

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: AFSP, BCOM
SUBJECT: PROPOSED TRANSFER OF COMMERCIAL POSITION

REF: A. STATE 249691. B. BANGKOK 19814 C. BANGKOK 18687

1. EMBASSY STRONGLY DISAGREES WITH USDOC PROPOSAL THAT BANGKOK POSITION 20-3410-256 BE TRANSFERRED TO SINGAPORE. ONLY WITH GREATEST DIFFICULTY HAS ECON/CML SECTION BEEN ABLE TO COPE WITH INCREASED WORKLOAD OF PAST YEAR THAT FOLLOWED, BUT WAS NOT WHOLLY DETERMINED BY, CLOSING OF TRADE CENTER IN JANUARY 1972. INCREASED COMPETITIVENESS OF US. GOODS WITH CONSEQUENT SHARP IN CREASE IN TRADE INQUIRES QUESTIONS REGARDING U.S. RESTRICTIONS ON EXPORT OF CERTAIN LEGISLATION RESTRICTION FOREIGN BUSINESSES AND BUSINESSMEN WERE ALL SIGNIFICANT FACTORS IN INCREASED WORKLOAD IN ADDITION TO ASSUMPTION BY ECON/CML SECTION FOR FIRST TIME IN DECADE OF DIRECT RESPONSIBILITY FOR TRADE PROMOTION EVENTS SUCH AS CATALOGUE SHOW AND "TECHSP "73". MOREOVER, STAGING OF LATTER WITH HIGHLY SATISFACTORY RESULTS AS REPORTED REFTEL C. WOULD HAVE BEEN OUT OF QUESTION WITHOUT FORTUITOUS ADDITION TO COMMERCIAL STAFF OF HIGHLY EFFECTIVE SUPERNUMERARY JUNIOR FSO FROM MAY INTO DECEMBER.

2. OUTLOOK FOR FUTURE REMAINS HIGHLY FAVORABLE ON EXPORT SIDE WITH VIRTUAL CERTAINTY OF SUBSTANTIAL INCREASE IN WORKLOAD UNDER GENERAL CATEGORY OF BUSINESS SERVICES, INCLUDING MAINTENANCE OF CLOSE RELATIONS WITH AMERICAN BUSINESS COMMUNITY, AMONG OTHER ACTIONS EMBASSY PLANS TO EXPLOIT THESE PROMISING TRADE EXPANSION OPPOR-
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TUNITIES ARE IN-HOUSE MARKET RESEARCH AND LOCALLY MOUNTED TRADE

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EXHIBITS ONCE FULL STAFF AVAILABLE. NEW COMMERCIAL OFFICES
THAT WERE OPENED IN EARLY 1973. WERE SPECIFICALLY DESIGNED
TO PROMOTE LATTER ASPECT OF EMBASSY'S
TRADE PROMOTION EFFORT. SERVERAL U.S. COMPANIES AND/OR THEIR LOCAL
AGENTS HAVE REACTED ENTHUSIASTICALLY TO PROSPECT OF USING THIS
IDEALLY ARRANGED AND SITUATED EXHIBIT SPACE. AIDED BY PARTIAL
EXPERIENCE GAINED FROM STAGING OF TRADE SHOWS IN 1973. EMBASSY
FORESEES LESSENED NEED TO DRAW ON SUPPORT FACILITIES FROM SINGAPORE
REGIONAL TRADE CENTER IN 1974.

3. IN EMBASSY'S VIEW, THEREFORE, REPROGRAMMING OF POSITION IN
QUESTION WOULD SHARPLY REDUCE EMBASSY'S TRADE AND INVESTMENT
PROMOTION
RESOURCES AT VERY MOMENT OF GROWING NEED AND BRIGHT PROMISE.
EMBASSY ALSO BELIEVES THAT UPWARD TREND INDICATED BY 23 PERCENT
INCREASE IN VALUE OF U.S. EXPORTS TO THAILAND FOR FIRST SEVEN MONTHS
OF 1973. OVER SAME PERIOD 1972. WILL CONTINUE. AT SAME TIME
SUDDEN OCTOBER CHANGE IN GOVERNMENT AND PLANS TO HOLD ELECTIONS
AND INSTALL NEWLY ELECTED GOVERNMENT IN SUMMER 1974.
ARE CREATING A NEW IF TEMPORARY CLIMATE OF UNCERTAINTY FOR AMERICAN
BUSINESSMEN LOOKING AT THAILAND.
IN RESPONSE TO ENCOURAGEMENT FROM WASHINGTON AND EMBASSY, THEY ARE
LOOKING INCREASINGLY TO ECON/CML SECTION FOR ASSISTANCE. UNDER
CIRCUMSTANCES, CONSEQUENCES OF PROPOSED TRANSFER OF EMBASSY'S
COMMERCIAL PROGRAM COULD ONLY BE DESCRIBED AS HIGHLY ADVERSE.
STRONGLY URGE THAT POSITON BE RETAINED IN BANGKOK.
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